

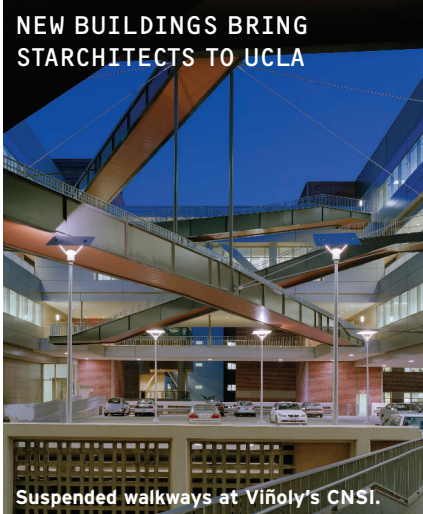
THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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NEW BUILDINGS BRING STARCHITECTS TO UCLA



Suspended walkways at Viñoly's CNSI.

BRAD FEINKNOF

WESTWOOD, HO!

While the red brick Italian Romanesque core of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) is an ubiquitous presence on LA's western skyline, the school is not often on the lips of those discussing great contemporary Southern California architecture. That may be about to change, as Westwood has been altered by three new campus structures by architectural heavyweights Richard Meier, Rafael Viñoly, and I.M. Pei.

The new buildings—still intended, say campus officials, to blend with the school's overall aesthetic—include Meier's recently-completed Broad Art Center, Viñoly's just-finished California NanoSystems Institute (CNSI), and **continued on page 8**

The nightclub and coffeshop on the Ambassador Hotel site.



COURTESY LAUSD

SETTLEMENT DECIDES FATE OF NIGHTCLUB AT THE AMBASSADOR HOTEL

R.I.P. THE GROVE

In late December the Los Angeles Conservancy and the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) reached a settlement in their longstanding battle over the historic Cocoanut Grove Night Club, a Los Angeles icon that had been a vital component of the now-demolished Myron Hunt-designed Ambassador Hotel since it opened on Wilshire Boulevard in 1921. The result: the Conservancy will allow the LAUSD to demolish the Grove and replace it with a

replica using new materials and containing an auditorium and lounge for the Central Los Angeles New Learning Center #1. The 4,000-plus student complex under construction is on the site of the Ambassador Hotel, which was dismantled in 2005. In return the LAUSD will contribute \$4 million toward the Historic Schools Investment Fund, which provides grants to help repair and restore historic LAUSD schools.

The cabaret-style, **continued on page 4**

SPF:A GIVES LACMA WEST A FACELIFT. SEE PAGE 3



Potential signature display on Wilshire Boulevard.

SPF:A

SEATTLE GETS A NEW STREETCAR

TRANSIT NAMED DESIRE

Trolleys are back in fashion, and the latest addition to the runway is the Seattle Streetcar, a 1.3 mile route that connects Seattle's fast developing South Lake Union district with Westlake Center, the city's downtown commercial hub. With similar lines transforming downtowns in Portland and San Francisco, this alternative option is gaining traction against traditional underground subways and bus lines. Open for business in December after 18 months of rapid construction, the Seattle Streetcar has developers and city officials starry-eyed with visions of a smoothly integrated **continued on page 2**



KEITH BROFSKY

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WORK STARTS ON NEW SAN FRANCISCO URBAN CENTER

COMMON GROUND

San Francisco's political and development scene is weird. The only people in the closet are Republicans. Liberals are aligned with downtown business interests and perceived as conservatives. Neighborhoods are so well organized they can stop all kinds of development. Local developers chuckle and call the process "a barrier to entry" for out-of-towners. For several years, a nonprofit think-tank called San Francisco Planning and Urban Research **continued on page 4**



COURTESY PFAU ARCHITECTURE

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EDITOR

Out with the old and in with the new. For as long as California has existed, that has been the unofficial mantra here, as sun-worshippers have flocked west to start over.

But the truth is, no matter how much we want to run from the past, protecting it can be an important way to enrich the future. And not just for nostalgic, touchy-feely reasons. In fact, historic preservation can be one of the great sustainable and economic forces we have at our disposal.

As we point out in this month's feature, restoring the wonderful old movie palaces of Broadway (p. 12) could be a key component in turning around downtown Los Angeles' fortunes. Politicians, residents, and preservationists have noted that a revived Broadway corridor, with a world-class draw like these sumptuous theaters, as well as restaurants and stores, could link the major developments going up on either end of Downtown at Grand Avenue, on Bunker Hill, and at L.A. Live in South Park.

Other cities have seen their fates reversed with historic preservation. The renovation of the art deco hotels of South Beach helped to turn that area from an afterthought into one of the world's party centers. While not its top priority, New Orleans is banking on its history to help draw people back in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. And from Westwood to the West Village and from Beacon Hill to North Beach, many cities' most popular neighborhoods to live in and visit are their historic areas.

But while we should embrace history's restorative effects, we need to keep a clear view of its limitations. We can't let our focus on history impede our ability to move forward and create innovative architecture and urban design. And we must be aware that restoring neighborhoods often means gentrification, aka throwing out the less-wealthy locals. Just take a look at much of gentrified Manhattan, where soaring prices for old and new buildings have forced all but the most solvent to the outer boroughs for affordable housing. In New Orleans, many argue that preserving old buildings will further distract from the plight of the poor. Here in LA the fates of Broadway's many less-upscale, often Hispanic-run stores have yet to be directly addressed. Questions on this subject to councilperson José Huizar, who is admirably spearheading the restoration of Broadway, have so far gone unanswered. If the area becomes more successful will there be rent control? Will existing stores and other establishments get an upgrade or an unaffordable lease? Will they be zoned out of existence?

It's not too early to be formulating answers to these difficult questions. Linda Dishman, executive director of the member-rich but funding-poor Los Angeles Conservancy (whose Broadway Initiative, established in 1999, has played a major role in the area's turnaround) says she thinks many of Broadway's existing establishments have the capital to stay, since a few already pay up to \$10 per square foot, higher rents than some stores in New York or even Beverly Hills. But it's important to develop a plan not only for maintaining historic buildings and turning around neighborhoods, but also for embracing the establishments and populations already rooted in those neighborhoods. Only then can preservation really live up to its name.

TRANSIT NAMED DESIRE continued from front page Seattle transit system that whisks commuters efficiently to work and brings brisk business to the shopping core downtown.

The \$52.1 million system is the first new rail line in the city in 25 years. The project is one of the largest urban redevelopment efforts in the nation, with over 10 million square feet of development capacity. The Streetcar was funded through both public and private means, with the city raising more than half of the construction cost through a local-improvement district tax. Cynics are suggesting that the major benefactor, however, will be Microsoft billionaire and landowner Paul Allen and his plan to transform the emerging but as yet undeveloped South Lake Union district into a major biotechnology hub and mixed-use district. Though the 11-stop route services a limited portion of the city, the real potential of the streetcar line is in its connection to the existing transit system, including metro and regional bus systems, light rail and ferries. Seattle City Council will meet early in the new year to determine whether the system could be expanded to reach into other underserved neighborhoods, an initiative enthusiastically supported by Mayor Greg Nickels. The opening of the streetcar system provides a turning point for a city often besieged with traffic problems and deteriorating road conditions.

Designed by the Inekon Group, each of the sleekly modern streetcars is composed of three cabs and can carry approximately 140 passengers. They are outfitted with high-tech features such as the NextBus GPS for users to check online when the next streetcar will arrive, LED message signs, and regenerative braking that returns electricity back to the grid. Digital message boards are also installed at route stops to alert riders when the next streetcar is coming. **MICHELLE KANG**

LETTERS

I enjoyed Sam Lubell's piece on the compromises and difficulties that emerge when going green (Editorial, CAN 06_12.12.07). Of course, we have to build green buildings. But the articles I have read to date seem to sweep under the rug any problems. And what about beauty? Should we sacrifice that to green? Think about some of the really

ugly buildings built in the early 1980s, during the last energy crisis. They are still around, being ugly every day. I hope to read more about the complexities of going green.

BENJAMIN MARK COLE
LOS ANGELES, CA

CORRECTIONS

In our report, "Green Lantern" (CAN 06_12.12.07) about the new Grand Rapids Art Museum, the name of a founding partner of wHY Architecture, designers of the museum, was omitted. The partner is Yo-ichiro Hakomiri. We regret the error.

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NOT FEELING *DWELL*

We thought an announcement that *Dwell* was debuting a narrower magazine printed with more soy inks on recycled content paper, saving about 930 trees per issue, was a sign that the erratic publication had finally settled on a theme: Sustainability. But when we got the February issue in our hands its direction seemed more convoluted than ever: Was this *Modernism for Dummies*, a Design Within Reach catalog, or straight-up shelter porn? The redesign rallies a cavalcade of new fonts—many completely unreadable over the splashes of gratuitous color—and overcrowded pages bisected by bizarre dotted lines. Former staffers have expressed frustration with the mag's bipolarity, but insist it's nothing new. "*Dwell's* biggest problem has always been that the message from the very top has been very confused," a past contributor tells us. "I suspect the editors aren't really being given total control now and so what we're seeing is a really watered-down version of what they probably wanted to do." The changing vision of founder **Lara Hedberg Deam** and publisher **Michela O'Connor Abrams** notoriously didn't mesh with the pub's two previous editors-in-chief, **Karrie Jacobs** and **Allison Arieff**, who both left the magazine very publicly at odds with its philosophy (more than 20 staffers also departed in Arieff's wake). But it seems the current editor-in-chief Sam Grawe might not mind letting Deam and Abrams steer the ship. Grawe is reportedly devoted to his budding music career: Windsurf, an electronica duo where he performs with a musician calling himself Sorcerer, and a solo project under the name—we swear we're not making this up—Hatchback. We hear he's pretty good, too.

MIAMI VICES

There were rumors that sales were not as scintillating at Design Miami this year, but we'll let you be the judge: The two most talked-about installations were trash(y)—a **Tokujin Yoshioka** installation of white plastic straws and **Stuart Haygarth's** chandelier made from used water bottles—and almost everyone mentioned that the Swarovski crystal lights by heavyweights **Diller Scofidio + Renfro** looked more like glowing scrotums. **Yves Béhar** emerged as a big winner at the One Laptop Per Child party, where he sold seven works by **Jorge Pardo**, **John Baldessari**, **Olafur Eliasson** and others to raise funds for the project. Perhaps the bling was located elsewhere, like around the neck of hip hop producer **Pharrell Williams**, who hung with **Arik Levy's** posse, and later showed up at the tattoo parlor manned by **Tobias Wong**, **Josée Lepage**, and Eavesdrop alum **Aric Chen**. According to Chen, Williams was so psyched on the limited-edition tattoo designs by designers like **Tord Boontje**, **Vito Acconci**, and **Hella Jongerius**, he wanted to contribute his own design. Okay, maybe next year, Pharrell, but only if you bring **Justin Timberlake**.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

Robert A.M. Stern may have already gotten the gig, but surely he could use some help designing the **George W. Bush** Presidential Library, right? *The Chronicle of Higher Education* is holding a competition to deliver Stern a wealth of ideas. Standard architecture contest rules apply, with one catch: Your entire concept must fit on the back of an envelope. Readers will vote on the best design, the winning designer will get an iPod Touch, and the architecture world will earn the undying admiration of the Republican Party. Deadline is February 1. To vote, visit chronicle.com/indepth/architecture/architecture-contest.htm

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LESS LIMELIGHT FOR MAJOR TRANSFORMATION OF NON-BROAD MUSEUM

THAT OTHER LACMA

Although it hasn't gotten much attention, another firm besides Renzo Piano Building Workshop is working on a major commission at the LA County Museum of Art (LACMA).

Culver City-based SPF:A in November finished first schematic designs for the renovation and transformation of LACMA's May Company Building, just west of Piano's almost-completed (and just snubbed by its namesake) Broad Contemporary Art Museum. The May building, known as LACMA West, now contains small exhibition spaces, offices, and warehouse-like storage. Many of its windows are boarded up. It will be transformed into a major exhibition space containing much of LACMA's contemporary art collection, as well as a restaurant, book shop, and special event spaces. The firm was commissioned for the project in August.

The five-story streamline moderne building at 6067 Wilshire was designed as a May Company department store by AC Martin and Samuel Marx in 1939. The structure's

most recognizable element is the cylindrical, gold-colored tower and deco signage on its northwest side. LACMA purchased the property in 1991, opening it for exhibitions in 1999. SPF:A will keep the facade intact, repairing and replacing worn-out elements and bringing the building to code. The northeast corner will be changed to accommodate a "signature" display, although that element has not been worked out, explained SPF:A partner Zoltan Pali.

Inside, the firm will open up once chopped-up spaces, creating open-plan gallery and work spaces, and using a minimal palette meant to defer to the artwork. The mezzanine, now boarded up, will be opened and connected to the entry to create a dramatic, double-height public space. The third and fourth floors will be used for offices, and the top floor will include a boardroom and outdoor gathering and exhibition spaces.

The project will be completed in 2010, and fundraising is in full swing. **SAM LUBELL**

> **ONEWORLD LOUNGE**
LAX International Terminal
Los Angeles
Designer: Gensler Architects



CHRISTOPHER BARRETT/HEDRICH BLESSING

Since its creation in 1984, the Tom Bradley International Terminal at LAX has offered little in the way of luxury, a real thorn in its reputation as an international airport. To remedy the situation, the airport recently opened up two floors for four new first class lounges, helping it compete with airports like San Francisco's recently revamped SFO, which has become a favorite among world travelers.

The nicest of these new lounges is the Oneworld Lounge, designed by Gensler, which consolidates the operations of Cathay Pacific, British Airways, and Qantas. The new business class and first class sections combine a cool, contemporary aesthetic with a warmer abstraction of outdoor LA living.

The entryway features a large media wall projecting images of nature and travel, with walls and flooring made of light Italian limestone. Timber screens divide the spaces behind into pantries, lounges, internet stations, and a bar. Rooms are lined with slatted American Walnut, resin walls embedded with seagrass, back-painted glass, and textured plaster. The lounges also feature private bathrooms and showers, reinforcing the overall spa mood.

The aesthetic aims to unify airlines representing Asian, British, and Australian cultures, said architect David Loyola. "It was harder than you think to get a consensus." He points out, however, that first class travel is no laughing matter for people who pay as much as \$25,000 for a first class ticket to Australia. **SL**



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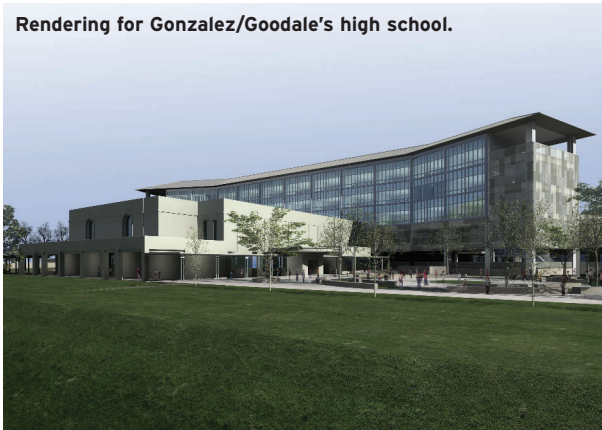
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R.I.P. THE GROVE

continued from front page
tropical-themed Grove, which was remodeled in the 1970's, had welcomed performers like Bing Crosby, Barbra Streisand, Frank Sinatra, and Sammy Davis, Jr., and had even hosted the Oscars. Along with the Ambassador, it had eventually fallen into disrepair and the LAUSD gained ownership of the buildings in 2001.

In 2004 the LAUSD board voted to dismantle the Ambassador in favor of the new complex, designed by Pasadena-based Gonzalez/Goodale Architects, but opted in its final impact report to preserve and reuse the Grove and its adjacent Paul Williams-designed coffee shop. That plan was scrapped earlier this year when the District's engineers noted that the building lacked "integrity and seismic stability," said the new school's project manager John Kuprenes. The LAUSD board then approved an additional environmental impact report on September 25 of last year, with a plan to tear down the Grove and rebuild it in the same dimensions using newer materials.

Rendering for Gonzalez/Goodale's high school.



COURTESY LAUSD

The Conservancy had organized an injunction on December 7 to stop demolition of the Grove, arguing in an October 25 lawsuit that the LAUSD's claim that the club was "technically infeasible" to maintain had not been clearly proven. A court date to decide the building's future had been set for February 25. But in a statement the Conservancy said it decided to give up the fight due in large part to the "increasing realization that true preservation of the site's remaining resources had become impossible due to what had already been lost." Much of the Grove had already been damaged by LAUSD construction crews

and looked like a shadow of itself sitting alone in the Learning Center's construction site. The Conservancy will also drop its effort to save the Ambassador Hotel's pantry—where Robert Kennedy was assassinated—which is now housed in pieces off-site.

The other, perhaps more important, factor was the District's agreement to donate \$4 million to the Historic Schools Investment Fund. That fund, administered by the California Community Foundation, was established in 2005 with \$4.9 million in settlement funds from the 2004 lawsuit over the Ambassador Hotel's demolition. **SL**

COMMON GROUND

continued from front page
Association (SPUR) has been trying to build bridges among these various factions. Although the organization's meetings and events are open to the public, the organization itself has been hidden away in a warren of tiny offices on Sutter Street. For some time, SPUR has wanted to "go retail" and convey transparency while accommodating a growing membership.

In early 2007, SPUR selected local firm Pfau Architecture to design a new 14,000-square-foot headquarters that began construction this month on busy Mission Street in the Yerba Buena Gardens arts district. It will contain meeting rooms, exhibition spaces, a library, and perhaps most important, daylight. Rarely are architects seen as philanthropists, but the varied forms of glazing, tiles, and louvers, not to mention the programs, excited so much interest in the architecture community that many firms pledged tens of thousands of dollars each to get the building constructed. Companies with deeper pockets, such as developers and contractors, have been big donors as well. SPUR also secured a grant from the California Cultural and Historical Endowment and financing through the California Municipal Finance Authority. Individual citizens have made up over 80 percent of the donations, according to the architects. SPUR has now reached the mark where construction can commence and groundbreaking is scheduled to take place in mid-March.

During the time required to secure funding for the \$12.5 million building, construction costs, however, have escalated. The building also became more green and more transparent. According to architect Peter Pfau, the mechanical and lighting systems are now more efficient. The building will also be an environmental showcase, showing visitors how the counters are made from recycled paper, how the handrails are



ART ZENDARSKI

made from recycled sunflower seeds, and how the green roof works. As San Francisco moves forward with a green ordinance (a policy that SPUR has a strong interest in), citizens will be able to literally see what it takes.

According to the architects, two recent refinements to the design include enclosing the Mission Street stairway in glass, so people moving between floors activate the main elevation, and creating a street-level display area that resembles full-size retail shop windows. This display area will feature models and drawings. As Jim Chappell, president of SPUR, said, "In the future, something like the Transbay Terminal competition models could be in our front window, and we could solicit immediate feedback."

Another hope is that citizens will access planning documents for their neighborhoods. As a model for SPUR, Chappell cites Paris' Pavillon de l'Arsenal, where planning information is organized by neighborhood and publicly available.

Despite incremental changes over the last few years, the big idea behind the SPUR Urban Center has not changed. Dialog around planning and development in San Francisco can now be based on factual information that is readily available, rather than on rumor or fear. The transparent building symbolizes that aspiration. **KENNETH CALDWELL**

LOCAL FUROR OVER ART SCHOOL'S ATTEMPT TO WEED OUT FLOWER MART

FLOWER POWER

To call the Academy of Art a ubiquitous presence in San Francisco is almost underselling its massive footprint. The 79-year-old university occupies 32 properties in several different neighborhoods, 27 of which they own. Such visibility has come at a cost, as the school's property-buying spree has brought less-than-favorable reviews from residents who accuse the school of ousting low-income tenants and eradicating affordable housing. But a new master plan for the school presented on December 6 has generated the most bitter opposition yet to its expansion, mostly because it revealed the purchase of South of Market's (SoMa's) much-loved Flower Mart, a building they plan to convert into a sculpture studio. The move would effectively evict the Flower Mart's 30 vendors, growers, and wholesalers.

Actively battling the Academy's presence on the ground is the Western SoMa Citizens Planning Task Force, a community group that wants to keep large institutional development out of their neighborhood. "Our real purpose is protecting small businesses in this light industrial zone," said task force chair Jim Meko. The task force proposed a 45-day moratorium on new institutional uses, which was approved by

the city's Board of Supervisors in December.

City officials, on the other hand, are concerned about the school's ongoing failure to file proper applications for its needs. According to widely-reported figures, the school has racked up 44 permit and zoning violations over the years. That's more than any institution in recent memory, noted Lawrence Badiner, zoning administrator for the city planning department. "They seem like they have a problem with understanding that they need to follow the law."

The Academy is currently in escrow with the flower mart property, and the former owner has already served vendors with eviction notices. However, according to Sam Lauter, a public affairs consultant for the school, the Academy has recently decided to amend its original plan and now hopes to find a way to share the space. "We will be in communication with the business owners to see how we can work with them on staying there, and seeing how their uses can be incorporated into our long-term uses," he said. "We are committed to the historical use of the Flower Mart."

Land-use attorney Sue Hester is not optimistic about this claim. Just before a Supervisors' meeting in January, she said it's more likely that the Board will extend the moratorium for an additional 22 months. "The Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and Planning Commission are all outraged and frustrated with the Academy," she said. "They have more than just a tin ear. They are missing a soul."

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TWO MUSEUM PROPOSALS UNVEILED IN SAN FRANCISCO

PRESIDIO FACE-OFF



Gluckman Mayner Architects' white-on-white scheme.

COURTESY GLUCKMAN MAYNER

"Sometimes," said Richard Gluckman, New York-based architect of the proposed Contemporary Art Museum at the Presidio in San Francisco, "respectful preservation means building in concert with or in contrast to the existing structure."

It is Gluckman's "in contrast to" approach for the museum, which he highlighted at a recent public meeting, that has incited impassioned debate among some San Franciscans. "Horrible! It's the rape of the Presidio," wrote one San Francisco Chronicle blogger. Another more favorable contributor wrote, "I still don't get it. Why must history live in a bubble? Why are we afraid to interact with it?"

The design by Gluckman, a principal at Gluckman Mayner Architects, is one of two proposals for cultural institutions at the Presidio's Main Post—the heart of the former military base-turned-park and location of its oldest existing buildings—unveiled at a public meeting at the Presidio Officer's Club on December 3. If chosen, Gluckman's museum would be funded by Gap founder Donald Fisher and his wife Doris, and would display the Fisher's private collection of 20th-century art by Andy Warhol, Frank Stella, Alexander Calder, Chuck Close, and Richard Serra, among others. The museum would also accommodate rotating exhibitions.

The competing proposal, submitted by Bogatay Architects on behalf of the Presidio Historical Association, is the 48,000-square-foot History Center of the Golden Gate, a museum that would explore the history of the Presidio and its place in U.S. history in seven galleries dedicated to different themes. The Presidio Trust, a federally appointed organization whose mission is to "preserve and

enhance the Presidio as an enduring resource for the American public," will select one of the two proposals in early 2008, a trust spokesperson said.

Gluckman's proposed building, a two-story, 100,000-square-foot minimalist composition of rectangular forms, boldly sets itself apart from the surrounding 19th-century military barracks and Mission-style Officer's Club, while still acknowledging their presence. Gluckman abstracted the distinctive white porches that line the exterior of the barracks; a cantilevered glass observation gallery on the north facade recalls their jutting form and inherent function, and the white mullions take cues from their slim white columns. And like the whitewashed brick structures throughout the Presidio, the Contemporary Art Museum is clad in white masonry.

Bogatay's design takes a more self-conscious approach, directly borrowing its form and architectural flourishes from its neighbors. With its pitched roofs, Spanish tiles, and small-paned windows, the building succeeds in conveying what the architect described as a vaguely military look. "Maybe I'm a bit conservative," said Lucia Bogatay, the project's lead designer, "but things you add to a historic district should be discreet."

While quite different, both

proposals conform to the Main Post Planning and Design Guidelines that stipulated, among other things, that the new work be differentiated from the old while remaining compatible in size and scale.

Gluckman noted at the meeting that "the disintegration of historic and contemporary styles strengthens and preserves the integrity of both." And yet the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of his design for the Contemporary Art Museum take inspiration from their surroundings. "The Montgomery Street barracks follow a 40-foot-by-80-foot grid, and our building follows a 40-foot grid," he explained.

But for the Historical Association, the idea of building a new structure on the Parade Ground is incongruous with the preservation of the district. "In proposing a museum of our own, we felt that if [the Presidio Trust] insisted on putting a building in that location, the only museum that would be appropriate would be a museum of history," Bogatay said. The History Center would not be a carbon copy of its surroundings, nor compete with the historic buildings at the Main Post, she added. "This is a National Historic district," she said. "As such, it needs to be treated more carefully."

NICOLE ONCINA



Bogatay Architects went contextual.

COURTESY BOGATAY ARCHITECTS



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Emeco Navy 1006®

Made with 80% recycled aluminum

Standard U.S. Navy issue since 1944

Used by Petty Officer FTG3 | Tony Kost



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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 30, 2008

WESTWOOD, HO! continued from front page
Pei and his son C.C.'s nearly-completed Ronald Reagan Medical Center. They are part of an ambitious expansion plan for the campus, which already has a population of nearly 40,000 and hundreds of acres of prime real estate.

"The existing style of the campus is extremely important in making any decisions regarding architecture," said campus architect Jeff Averill. "New buildings must have a contextual response to the campus. We have a framework, a palate of materials that we use. Of course, there are exceptions, and these three new buildings have more exceptions than other projects."

Completed last fall, Richard Meier and Partners' Broad Art Center is a welcome top-to-bottom renovation of the original Dickson Art Center by William Pereira. Completed in the early 1960s, the cast concrete building was ill-suited to making art from the get-go, due to its low-light, dense studios and poor ventilation. Then, damage from the Northridge earthquake of 1994 was so extensive that renovation or demolition was the only answer.

"This space is all about creating the best possible light and space for teaching and making art," said principal architect Michael Palladino of Richard Meier and Partners. "Our goal was to pull all the weight off the face of the building and to reuse it at an appropriate scale. We took a lighter concrete system, created proper sun control on the south side, and made the building more transparent," he said.

Perhaps most significantly, the circulation was moved from an inner corridor to cantilevered corridors located outside so that the expanded studio spaces receive both natural

circulation and natural light throughout the day. "The building can be naturally ventilated nine months of the year," said Palladino. Teak slats on the west-facing facade, brick paving in UCLA's familiar, four-hued red palette at the east facade, and off-white cast concrete are all nods to the campus aesthetic.

The south campus is receiving its share of construction as well. Located in what was once a cramped bit of space over an existing parking structure, the spectacular California NanoSystems Institute (CNSI), finished by Rafael Viñoly Architects in December, completes a group of contemporary-style science buildings known collectively as the Court of Sciences. Structures by Ralph Johnson and Cesar Pelli flank the CSNI and help to create a dense south campus network of buildings.

Set on a relatively small footprint, the CSNI is meant to bring together several scientific disciplines. The seven-story building, of which three floors were constructed over an existing parking structure, centers on fostering collaboration among scientific teams. "The design reflects how this work is performed: Large undetermined technical spaces with unexpected modes of circulation that encourage random activity," said Viñoly.

The exterior of the CSNI is deceptive; its clean brick and metal facade belies the hive-like interior courtyard. As if spun by an industrial arachnid, the chaotic web of pathways suspended above a portion of the parking structure connects various corners of the building. Though jarring at first, these suspended walkways are meant to illustrate the larger aim of this burgeoning technology. "It's all about creating connections across disciplines," said Averill. "The walkways and

inner courtyard are indicative of that.

The connections across this space are an expression of the idea of this building."

By far the most monumental and expensive building being completed on campus is the Ronald Reagan Medical Center. Designed by Pei Partnership Architects, this building will entirely replace the old UCLA Medical Center.

At a cost in excess of \$850 million, the Medical Center will be among the most technologically advanced hospitals in the world. "The kind of things that are incorporated into the building in terms of function and

technology take health care into a new era," said Averill. Utilizing more than three million pounds of travertine—clearly evident on its facade—the one million-plus-square-foot, 10-story hospital is on a four-acre site at the southwest corner of the campus.

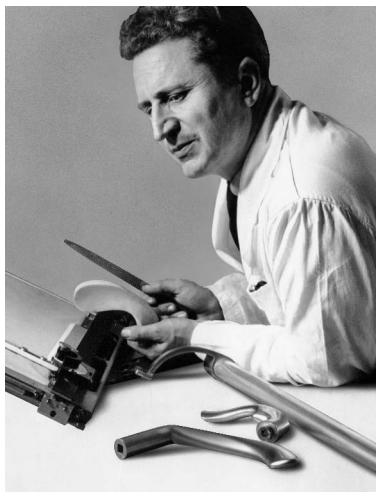
Patient rooms will all be equipped with technologies like wireless internet, robotics, and digital imaging capability that enable a level of medical care unavailable even ten years ago. "The Center makes any other project on campus pale in comparison," said Averill. "It is so much bigger than anything else." **JAKE TOWNSEND**

Richard Meier and Partners' Broad Art Center.



TIM GRIFFITH

FSB 1020 One of the Originals



Enduring Quality, Eternal Design

The FSB 1020 model is the clearest embodiment of the "good form" of the 1950s. This is a lever handle that flourishes by dint of the organic flow of its moulded-to-the-hand design and because it somehow looks symmetrical without actually being so. Johannes Potente's intention with this design was to provide a dynamic counterpoint to the linearity of doors.

FSB 1020 is one of four models designed by Johannes Potente that, in the summer of 1998, were added to the permanent collection at the MoMA in New York.

There is always a name behind the levers of FSB.

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Clockwise from top left: The combined kitchen and living area; open living space with flexible storage-display units; grey lacquered MDF and zinc outside a bathroom; living room with epoxy-coated concrete floors.



Transforming a cramped, outdated, cookie-cutter 1960s bungalow into an open, contemporary, peaceful oasis within a \$425,000 budget is almost impossible. But, says San Diego architect Jennifer Luce, it helps to use a little music.

The 2,300-square-foot house, located in La Jolla, California, was renovated for Greg Lemke, a scientist at the nearby Salk Institute whose other passion is

classical composing. Luce took advantage of the client's skill by working with him to produce a house that, like the best music, is unified by a single theme but enriched by its variations.

The unifier in the Lemke house is a central "spine," a much-needed storage system clad with grey lacquered MDF and quartz zinc. It contains bookshelves, closets, and art display spaces that divide

the kitchen and living space. Thanks to this system, Luce was able to open up and pristinely simplify the rest of the house. The open plan of the living room and kitchen allows visitors to see from the new glass front door all the way to the new back sliding glass doors, whose floor to ceiling height opens up the space, as do new windows that line almost every square inch of the living room and provide views from the hilltop location all the way to the ocean.

The variations come on all sides of the spine, moves that lend the renovation a modern complexity. Dark, epoxy-coated concrete floors provide glamour and create stunning reflections. Contemporary countertops and cabinets (carefully concealing elements like the refrigerator and dishwasher) are made of a varied grid of bleached oak, painted steel,

and polycarbonate. Their lightness, and the kitchen's white walls, contrast strikingly with the darker hues surrounding them. The nearby bedroom, bathroom, and study have been opened up and fitted with a similar material palette and with modern windows and sliding doors, while outdoor landscaping has been modified with a simple yet

graceful combination of pebbles and concrete. Lighting is minimal but unexpected, using unique fixtures that give the house a cozy but elegant feel, a mix between a retreat cabin and an art museum.

Luce's renovation is a simple but drastic improvement that has transformed a suburban afterthought into a striking, unified,

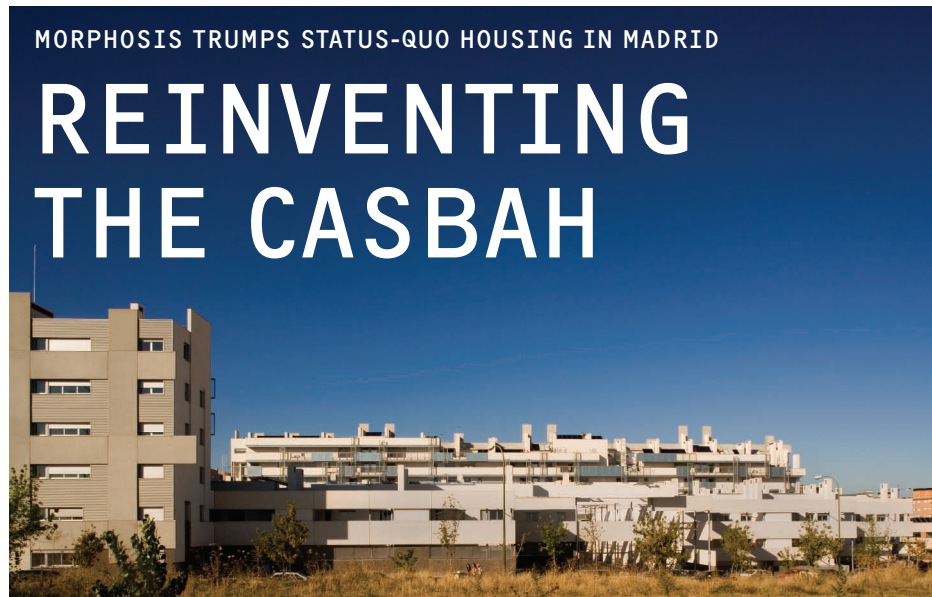
dazzler. "It's a reinvented version of the house," says Luce, who calls the rest of the neighborhood a takeoff on a typical Midwest 1960s development, with closed walls, narrow windows, and generic plans. "It's got its own cadence and rhythm, and its simplicity helps us choose a few elements that really make it exciting." **SL**



Once a bungalow, now a glass house. Left: Master bath.



THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 30, 2008



NC LEHOUX

The competition-winning social housing project in Madrid that Morphosis completed in December offers a dramatic contrast to the bland brick towers of middle-class apartments that surround it. A gleaming white complex of cubist blocks, patios, and walkways, it evokes the hill villages of Andalusia or the casbahs of North Africa. Located in Carabanchel, a master-planned community bordered by the ring road to the southwest of the city, it is one of 27 projects in the area sponsored by EMVS, the Madrid housing

authority. The construction budget was a frugal \$90 per square foot, and the completed units are offered for sale or rent at a third of the market rate.

Morphosis principal Thom Mayne rose to the challenge. "We've always made a practice of building inexpensively," he said. "I share the idealism of the early modernists, and the client gave us free rein conceptually as long as we met the budget." For this first venture in Spain, Mayne's team collaborated with BDU Estudio de Arquitectura, a fledgling Madrid

firm founded by Begona Diaz-Urgorri, who briefly worked for Morphosis and gained experience building another innovative project for EMVS.

Residential construction in Spain is booming. Government agencies estimate that 900,000 units were built last year—almost as many as were constructed in the rest of Europe during that time. In part the increase is due to a surge of immigration, in part to a frenzy of speculation, but most of the privately financed houses and apartment blocks are conventional in design and poorly constructed. Public housing is much more adventurous, and Mayne's vision, which was fleshed out by Diaz-Urgorri and Morphosis project architect Pavel Getov, is a brilliant reworking of vernacular architecture in the tradition of Le Corbusier and Team Ten.

The architects stacked the two-bedroom apartments in a thin-section, seven-story slab that runs along the north side of the site. The street facade has small openings, and the apartments open up to south-facing terraces at each level. A four-story block defines the south boundary, and these two bars of small units bracket a village-like complex of three- and four-bedroom duplexes, with a podium of parking below. A broad paseo, shaded by aluminum mesh canopies that will support a variety of flowering plants, bisects the complex from north to south, connecting to a network of narrow passages. Public plazas alternate with inner patios.

"We tried to create an infrastructure for social interchange, with neighbors meeting casually and conversing from one space to another," says Mayne.

To keep construction costs down, the architects played variations on a simple, three-dimensional module, and employed the standard building system of concrete frames and stuccoed brick infill. Mesh-covered styrofoam panels sprayed with cement are supported on steel poles to define the paseo. The mature trees that Morphosis had wanted to plant were eliminated as an economy, and the plantings have yet to soften the canopies, giving the project a sharp-edged Constructivist look. The units are compact (600 to 1,000 square feet), but attractively finished with hardwood floors, terrazzo stairs, and built-in cabinets. Chimney-like towers serve as ventilation shafts, pulling in cool breezes and evacuating hot air, and natural ventilation from the open spaces keeps the units cool on all but the hottest days. Solar panels contribute to the heating, while abundant natural light also reduces energy costs.

This project, and a neighboring block that Foreign Office Architects recently completed, show how committed architects can enrich the lives of the working poor in a way and to an extent that is rarely seen in American cities. The Madrid housing agency has boldly pursued its goal of providing superior housing at minimal cost, and its program deserves to be emulated here. **MICHAEL WEBB**

AT DEADLINE

DALLAS' MAYNE MAN

On January 8, the year-old Museum of Nature & Science in Dallas, TX, announced that Morphosis would design a new \$150 million facility dedicated to promoting innovative science and technology for all ages, located in the city's downtown cultural hub, known as the Art District. While the selection of Morphosis shows the continued trend towards boldface architecture worldwide, the Art District already boasts a number of impressive projects by the likes of I.M. Pei, Renzo Piano, Rem Koolhaas/Joshua Prince-Ramus, Snøhetta, and SOM.

MIDWEST LOVES ZAHA

Speaking of Morphosis, it appears that hometown pride counts for little with fellow Angelino Eli Broad. Instead, Michigan State University chose Zaha Hadid Architects on January 15 as design architects for the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum, announced last June when the well-known billionaire made a \$26 million gift to the school. The British architect's firm also beat out Coop Himmelb(l)au, Kohn Pederson Fox, and Randall Stout Architects, also of L.A. This is Hadid's second U.S. project, both of which are in the Midwest.

PARTIES BRAWL OVER CHARLES BUKOWSKI'S APARTMENT, POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS

POET'S CORNER

Following a defamatory plot twist better suited to a catchpenny tell-all than the bare-knuckled, confessional works of poet-novelist Charles Bukowski, the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission voted on November 28, three-to-one, in favor of recommending the author's former bungalow at 5124 De Longpre Avenue in the city's "Little Armenia" district for designation as a Cultural Historical Monument.

The crumbling Spanish Colonial Revival courtyard apartment, now vacant and quarantined behind a chain link fence, was Bukowski's home from 1963 to 1972, a decisive period in the author's life. At De Longpre he split his time between grueling shifts as a postal worker and hours spent diligently pounding himself onto the page at his cramped typing desk. Of course, he also found time for drinking. De Longpre was also where he transformed himself from a virtually unknown writer into an internationally celebrated author, having written *Post Office*, *Factotum*, and his newspaper column, *Notes of a Dirty Old Man* there. "I laid down my guts," he said of that prolific time and place, "and the gods finally answered."

Nearly 14 years after Bukowski's death, his old stucco refuge has been answered—not by gods, but disciples. Esotouric Tours co-founder Richard Schave and photographer Lauren Everett spearheaded the effort to save the property from demolition after coming across a posting on Craigslist advertising the 12,500-square-foot lot as a prospective teardown. Acting quickly, the pair convinced the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission to intercede. Everett hopes to see a writers'

community take root at a revitalized Bukowski Court, a notion that Bukowski, who proudly displayed his "Outsider of the Year" award at De Longpre, would likely have disdained.

Concurrently, Schave is involved in a similar campaign several blocks south of De Longpre to save the former residence of *Ask the Dust* author John Fante. Bukowski was instrumental in resurrecting the work of his nearly forgotten hero in the early 1980s.

After the Cultural Heritage Commission toured De Longpre on November 1, designation of Bukowski's bungalow as a cultural landmark seemed all but assured. Unfortunately, the property's owners, Victoria Gureyeva and Aleksandr Kononov, did not share Schave and Everett's enthusiasm for the hard drinking bard of East Hollywood. A lawyer representing Gureyeva filed an eleventh hour extension opposing the designation on the grounds that Bukowski was a Nazi sympathizer.

The allegations stem from a 2003 article titled "When Bukowski Was a Nazi," written by playwright and estranged Bukowski acquaintance Ben Pleasants. His claims consist mainly of unrecorded conversations with Bukowski and the alleged existence of pro-Nazi stories seized by the FBI—unseen to this day, despite Bukowski's file being a matter of public record. Ultimately, the commission was unmoved by the last-minute attempt to discredit Bukowski, who was sternly apolitical throughout his life.

The commission typically dedicates up to 50 landmarks each year, mainly for architectural significance, although they do allow for

recognition of sites important to the city's cultural and social history. The unremarkable stucco courtyard certainly would not earn a reprieve from the wrecking ball on its architectural merits.

The court was built between 1922 and 1926 by Pacific Ready Cut Homes, a Los Angeles-based firm that sold 37,000 high quality kit homes using clear, old-growth lumber between 1909 and 1940, as practical California bungalows replaced ornate Victorians. The rectangular, utilitarian structures that comprise Bukowski's Court have flat, red clay tile roofs, an open porch with square, untrimmed columns and—like their famous former tenant—present a rough, unadorned (stucco) finish. Probably not the kit Ready Cut had in mind when they published a magazine advertisement that read, "It fairly breathes happiness."

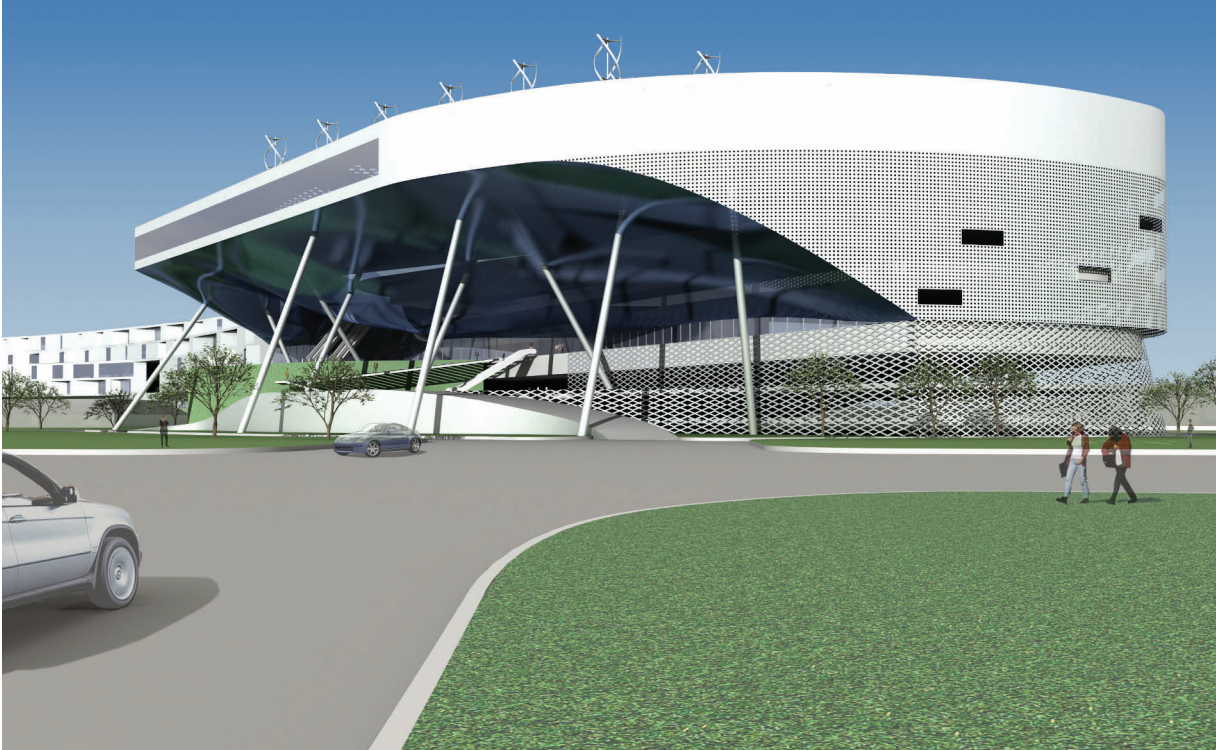
In a delicious and peculiarly Californian coincidence, Pacific Ready Cut began transitioning out of manufacturing kit homes in the 1930s to become one of the nation's first large-scale producers of surfboards. The company popularized the now-infamous "Swastika" board until 1939 when the eruption of World War II made the ancient symbol decidedly unfashionable.

With regard to Bukowski's alleged Nazi leanings, the Cultural Heritage Commission has determined that, indeed, Charlie Don't Surf. With that, the issue moves to the city's Planning and Land Use Management Committee before eventually reaching the full City Council for final determination of the fate of 5124 De Longpre Avenue.

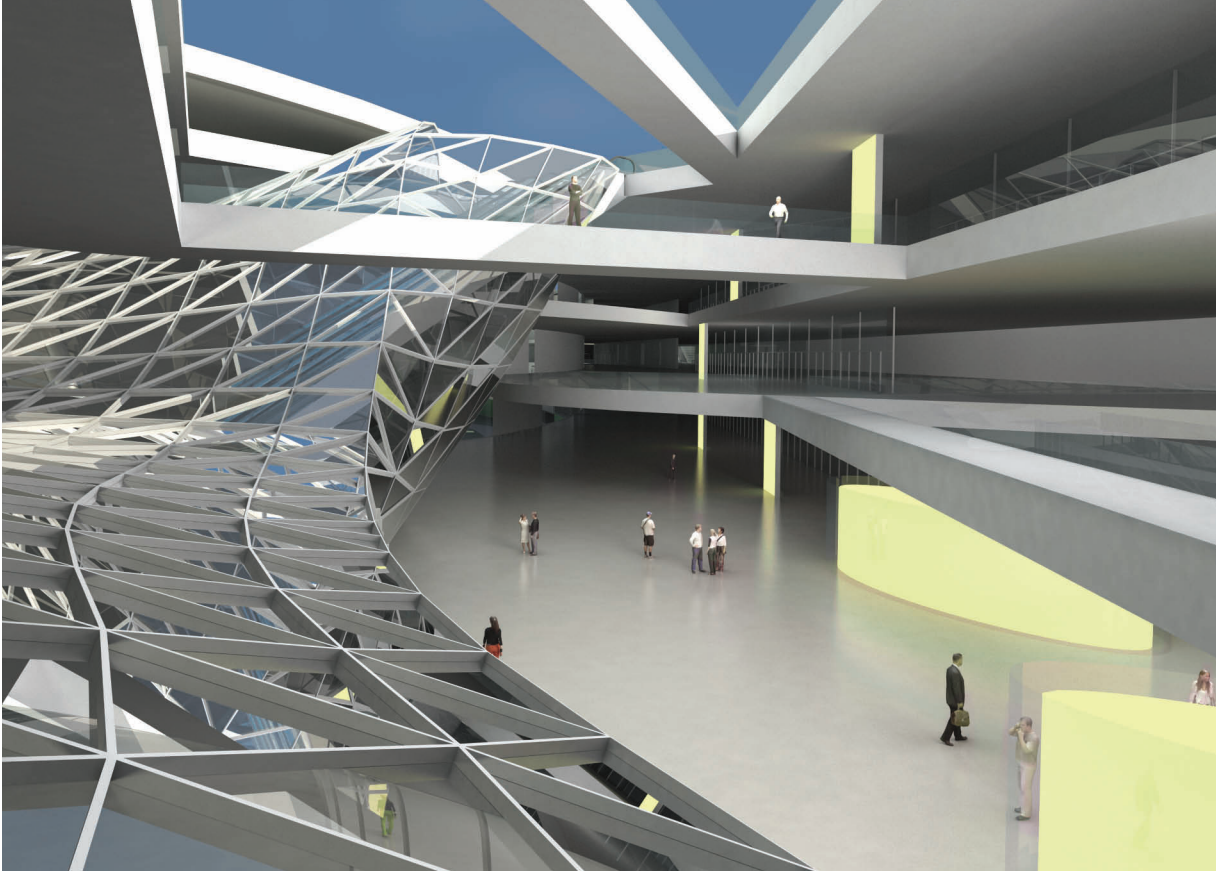
That decision will provide an epilogue for a bitter and convoluted brawl over a modest apartment, about which Bukowski wrote simply in his poem *The New Place*: "I type at a window that faces the street/on ground level and/if I fall out/the worst that can happen is a dirty shirt/under a tiny banana tree."

MIKE SCHULTE

A media-mesh signage system clads part of the exterior.



Escalators are enclosed within a dynamic glass and steel circulation "funnel".



The building's shape is meant to mimic that of a koi fish.



LA-based John Friedman Alice Kimm Architects (JFAK) recently completed schematic drawings for one of the largest, most unusual buildings ever to pop up along a Southern California Freeway.

Called MIRA, a reference to a star system in which two luminaries rotate around each other (i.e., the US and China), the two million-square-foot building—by far the firm's largest commission to date—will be a showroom facility for higher-end Chinese furniture, automobile, textile, technology, and fashion companies to display their products for commercial buyers in the United States. Up until now, much of this process has involved U.S. retailers flying to China to visit dispersed suppliers.

The brainchild of Taiwanese developer Jason Chung, MIRA sits strategically alongside the CA-55 freeway near the junction of the 405 and 5 freeways in Santa Ana. The design includes three levels of parking, four levels of showrooms, 50,000 square feet of exhibition space, an auditorium, café, restaurants, lounges, and a business center. Chung is still securing funding, but Kimm said construction should begin in early 2010.

To take advantage of the building's freeway location, JFAK clad the 1,900-foot-long, 110-foot-tall reinforced concrete structure in perforated metal panels fitted with LED signage advertising various Chinese brands. The signage uses two types of LEDs: a "mediamash media-facade" system in which LED light strips integrate into the exterior mesh fabric of the building, and a "light-house LED panel system" that works on the more clearly defined paneled areas of the facade. The designers carried the LED signage through to the inside of the building, as well. A 10,000-panel rooftop photovoltaic system, producing more than 1.5 million watts of electricity each day, will provide most of the electricity needed to power the LEDs.

Like many new Chinese buildings, MIRA's form is symbolic of nature. Shaped like a koi fish, a respected animal in Chinese tradition that also happens to have a very shiny skin, the building's bright, twisting profile will have a pointed, glazed "head," its entrance, supported on slender steel columns, and a large steel "tail" that twists upward to form the roof.

The architects clad the base of the building, which houses parking, in a stainless steel mesh "green screen" that will be planted with vines. Visitors will enter the cavernous, naturally ventilated and lit exhibition hall, which is meant to showcase larger items and encourage informal interaction, at the northeastern edge of the site. From there, they can use the building's glass and steel circulation "funnel" to travel from the exterior podium all the way to the rooftop via a series of escalators.

JFAK organized the showrooms as a simple system of back-to-back modules faced entirely in glass. The public walkways that surround them are punctured with freestanding pods that house services like conference rooms, offices, miscellaneous services, and rest areas. Each office block has access to its own planted courtyard, and the building's top level includes a series of gardens, viewing platforms, offices, and restaurants.

In addition to the solar panels, the sculptural roof is planted with native vegetation to absorb rainwater and filter carbon dioxide. The green roof slopes into a green wall that drops down into the building, forming the focal point of an indoor garden space. Wind turbines on the roofs of the restaurant volumes will help further power the building.

"Finally, a truly 21st century proposition," said Kimm of the project. "A global clientele, a huge, unwieldy, complex program, and a surreal and placeless site. We're really excited." **SL**



NEW HOPE
FOR BROADWAY'S
OLD MOVIE PALACES
BY SAM LUBELL

PALACE REVIVAL

Sexy, transformative new developments have directed a bright spotlight over the past few years on downtown Los Angeles, including the ambitious Grand Avenue project, the gargantuan LA Live!, and the slew of residential lofts popping up everywhere. All the while, downtown has been sitting on an existing cultural (and perhaps economic) gold mine that has been virtually ignored: the amazing historic theaters of Broadway, hailed by many as the greatest collection of classic movie palaces in the country.

Most of the 12 structures, opened in the 1920s and 30s when movies and vaudeville ruled the entertainment world, closed in the 1980s and 90s as multiplexes began to take over and as downtown hit rock bottom. And most of these stunners still remain shuttered, collecting dust and mold. Some were converted to churches in recent years. Others became fronts for stores.

But they were not destroyed; and so hope remains for their redevelopment. Two have recently been renovated and reopened, and this month the city announced an agreement with several theater owners to try to bring back more.

The sumptuous theaters, whose festive marquees still dot much of Broadway, are breathtaking, harkening to an era of opulence and excitement that is almost impossibly dazzling. They include architect G. Albert Lansburgh's Orpheum (1926), a French Renaissance-style theater whose ornate columns, chandeliers, and intricately-carved embellishments recall the Paris Opera House; May Company department store architect A. C. Martin's Million Dollar Theater (1918); Sid Grauman's first theater, a baroque combination of Spanish, Western, and Moorish styles; and architect S. Charles Lee's unbelievably lavish Los Angeles Theater (1931), with its Corinthian columns and pilasters, three-tiered fountain, huge crystal chandeliers, and lavish staircases, and opera boxes. Others, like the State, the Palace, and the Tower, are equally impressive.

Though still standing, they look forlorn, like musty old mansions in the opening scenes of a horror flick. The State has been converted into a church, the Cathedral de la Fe, while others, like the Rialto and the Arcade, have become storefronts for selling clothing, cell phones, music, and even aquariums.

The rest of Broadway, much like today's Canal Street in New York, is dominated by a lively, but gritty and disjointed collection of jewelry dealers, discount clothing stores, pawn shops, electronics showrooms, and bridal shops.

But the longtime neglect of the theaters and their street may be over, say some local politicians and conservationists. With the surrounding development of downtown lending momentum, an effort has been building to reopen some of the theaters, becoming a vital part of downtown's turnaround. Already the 1,970-seat Orpheum, owned for many years by developer Steve Needleman, was beautifully renovated in 2001 (at a cost of about \$4 million) by Fisher Sehgal Yanez Architects and Kelly Architects, and is now used for live theater, music shows, and tv specials (including an American Idol episode). Its lobby and auditorium have new paint, new rugs, new seats, new sound, electrical, and plumbing, and carefully cleaned marble, gold leaf, and bronze ornamentation. Its upper floors, where once garment factory workers toiled, are now rental lofts (renovated by David Gray Architects for \$5 to 6 million).

A less intensive but still effective renovation of the Million Dollar Theater (including new paint, new rugs, and substantial cleaning) by Santa Monica-based Donald Barny is nearly complete. Robert Voskanian, a managing partner at the theater, says it should reopen by February. The Los Angeles Theater, which has been undergoing renovation over the last twenty years or so, is already available for rent, hosting events like a Jules Verne Film festival last December. Rumor has it that other theaters may be converted into nightclubs or even boutique hotels.

Equally significant, on January 28, City Councilmember Jose Huizar was set to announce a partnership with Broadway's theater owners in which both sides pledged to help fix up the theaters and Broadway in general. As part of the initiative, called "Bringing Back Broadway," the city would provide more parking (particularly at Pershing Square), improve Broadway's sidewalks and streetscapes, implement a historic lighting and design guideline program, provide incentives (including tax breaks and expedited



© BERGER/CONSER; PHOTOGRAPHY FROM "THE LAST REMAINING SEATS: MOVIE PALACES OF TINSeltown"

The Orpheum Theater's sumptuous auditorium (facing page) is decorated in the French Renaissance style. Its ornate upper lobby (above) features Neoclassical balustrades and Corinthian pilasters lit by bronze chandeliers.





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permitting) for upper-level living, and lower level entertainment and amenities, and even try to bring back the historic Red Line Trolley. The councilman also plans to introduce a City Council motion to initiate an “overlay zone” in the area to help attract new restaurants, bars, and retail.

Several of the theater owners have agreed, for their part, to create business plans within three months for upgrading and renovating their theaters, to seek tenants for uses of the upper level-floors, to offer rent reductions to entertainment and amenity uses on lower level floors, and to adhere to the city’s and the local Business Improvement Districts’ security measures and urban design guidelines.

The move is the most ambitious yet by the city directed toward the theaters themselves, and one that Huizar feels will be the final step in turning around the street. He says the plan will bring new life to Broadway, an important link, he says, between other large downtown developments like L.A. Live and Grand Avenue.

“I want to see a Broadway that is walkable, shoppable, an enjoyable pedestrian area that provides entertainment, restaurants, and retail amenities to the people of Los Angeles,” he said.

Michael Delijani, whose Delson Investment Company owns several theaters on the street—the Los Angeles, the State, the Palace, and the Tower Theaters—could not be reached for comment. But he recently told the Wall Street Journal, “The timing is finally right for the revitalization of Broadway.” All of his properties are available for rent, although the Los Angeles is by far in the best condition.

While the city should be lauded for its efforts, much credit for transforming Broadway goes to the Los Angeles Conservancy, a preservation group whose own effort, called the Broadway Initiative, started in 1999, has lobbied hard to use the theaters and Broadway’s other historic structures to energize the area. Among other things, the Conservancy has helped obtain federal money for historic building rehabilitation and has secured local legislation to support historic loft conversions and better parking. It has also helped create local design guidelines, a historic facade rehabilitation program, and

has helped market the theaters with events like Last Remaining Seats, in which various theaters are open to the public for movie screenings.

The real battle is to convince business owners that these grand palaces are worth saving. Some are skeptical that the city’s recent maneuvering will get results, noting that there is little market for more theaters downtown and little money to do what needs to be done.

“To make a usable theater, it requires millions of dollars in investment,” said Ed Kelsey, manager at the Orpheum. Kelsey says that while the Orpheum is turning a yearly profit, he doesn’t know if Needleman will ever make up the money he put into the theater.

“This happens every five to ten years; someone has a plan to save the theaters,” he added. (For instance, the city’s Nighttime Broadway Initiative of 2001 yielded few results.) “But until you find someone who’s willing to spend millions, you can’t compete with other theaters in the area.” He added that the addition of new facilities like the recently-opened Nokia Theater only adds more competition.

Huizar argued that the demand for theaters downtown is still high, pointing out that the Orpheum is consistently booked. He said that his plan will differ from those of the past since those plans had “lacked the ability to bring all sides to the table at the same time.”

Meanwhile, Voskanian at the Million Dollar Theater said he had not been informed of the initiative, evidence that the city has yet to reach out to all of the theaters. Others worry that all this new development on Broadway might displace a well-entrenched Latino community, which has brought life and commerce back to a street that was before pretty dead. The fate of many stores is still up in the air.

But for now, the mood is bright and the thought of these stunning palaces becoming an active part of Los Angeles makes even the most cynical people a little bit excited.

“It will be interesting to see how the owners respond to this,” said the LA Conservancy’s executive director Linda Dishman. “We’re creating a vision and giving encouragement, but there are no guarantees.”



© BERGER/CONSER; PHOTOGRAPHY FROM “THE LAST REMAINING SEATS: MOVIE PALACES OF TINSeltown”

The Million Dollar Theater (top), Sid Grauman’s first, mashes Moorish, Spanish, and Baroque styles. The State Theater (above) with 2,450 seats, is the largest brick-clad building in Los Angeles. The lobby of the Los Angeles Theater (opposite page), with its crystal chandeliers, gold-leaf detailing, and ornate ironwork, is the city’s most lavish.

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 30, 2008

JANUARY

THURSDAY 31
LECTURES
Eric Haskell
The Gardens of Brecy: A Lasting Landscape
7 p.m.
Descanso Gardens
418 Descanso Dr., La Canada
Flintridge
www.descansogardens.org

Marianne Lamonaca
La Dolce Vita—
Italian Decorative Arts from
the 1920s to the 1950s
7 p.m.
Los Angeles County
Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.lacma.org

Peter Walker
Before the Memorial
7 p.m.
W.M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

FEBRUARY

SATURDAY 2
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Rommelo Yu
Chung King Project
936 Chung King Rd.,
Los Angeles
www.chungkingproject.com

William Theophilus Brown
Elins Eagles-Smith Gallery
49 Geary St., San Francisco
www.eesgallery.com

James Buckhouse
Walter Maciel
2642 South La Cienega Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.waltermacielgallery.com

FILM
Rancho La Canada:
Then and Now
(John Newcombe, 2007),
138 min.
10 a.m.
Descanso Gardens
418 Descanso Drive,
La Canada Flintridge
www.descansogardens.org

SUNDAY 3
LECTURE
Fowler OutSpoken Panel:
The Word in LA
Elizabeth Harney,
Robbie Conal, Alexandra
Grant, and Lezley Saar
2 p.m.
Fowler Museum of Art
308 Charles East Young Dr.,
Los Angeles
www.fowler.ucla.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Disorderly Conduct: Recent
Art in Tumultuous Times
Orange County
Museum of Art
850 San Clemente Dr.,
Newport Beach
www.ocma.net

WITH THE KIDS
Paul Klee: Creature Creations
12 p.m.
San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

WEDNESDAY 6
LECTURE
Manuel DeLanda
The New Materialism
and the Mind
7 p.m.
W.M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

THURSDAY 7
LECTURE
Jean-Louis Cohen
Le Corbusier's Vers Une
Architecture
4 p.m.
Museum Lecture Hall
The J. Paul Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr.,
Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

FRIDAY 8
LECTURE
Janis Tomlinson
Goya: The Disasters of War
7:30 p.m.
Berkeley Art Museum
and Pacific Film Archive
2625 Durant Ave., Berkeley
www.bampfa.berkeley.edu

SATURDAY 9
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
TANAKA Shinpei
ANDLAB
600 Moulton Ave.,
Los Angeles
www.andlab.com

Dave Cooper
Billy Shire Fine Arts
5790 Washington Blvd.,
Culver City
www.billyshirefinearts.com

Elkhorn Slough:
Photographs by
Michael Kenna
Monterey Museum of Art
558 Pacific Street, Monterey
www.montereyart.org

Danica Phelps
Stripe Factory
Sister
437 Gin Ling Way,
Los Angeles
www.sisterla.com

Revealing the Section
San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

Chris Ballantyne
When the World Was Flat
John O'Reilly
Portraits
Hosfelt Gallery
460 Clementina St.,
San Francisco
www.hosfeltgallery.com

SUNDAY 10
LECTURES
Artis Lane,
Charmaine Jefferson
Reflecting on a Life in Art
2:00 p.m.
California African American
Museum
600 State Dr., Los Angeles
www.caam.ca.gov

LIST YOUR
EVENT AT
DIARY@
ARCHPAPER.COM

Andrew Robison
The Marriage of Venice
and Rome: What Makes
Piranesi Great
3 p.m.
The J. Paul Getty Villa
17985 Pacific Coast Hwy.,
Pacific Palisades
www.getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Jennifer Falck Linssen
The Contemporary Katagami
Craft and Folk Art Museum
5814 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.cafam.org

Collecting Collections
California Plaza
250 South Grand Ave.,
Los Angeles
www.moca-la.org

One Way or Another:
Asian American Art Now
The Japanese American
National Museum
369 East 1st St., Los Angeles
www.janm.org

TUESDAY 12
LECTURE
John Brewer
Who Wants to be a
Connoisseur?
The Politics of a
Disputed Leonardo
Museum Lecture Hall
The J. Paul Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr.,
Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Johan Grimoprez
Dial H-I-S-T-O-R-Y
Armand Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd.
www.hammer.ucla.edu

WEDNESDAY 13
LECTURE
Edward Eigen
A Crash Course in History
7 p.m.
W.M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Enrique Chagoya
Borderlandia
Berkeley Art Museum
and Pacific Film Archive
2625 Durant Ave., Berkeley
www.bampfa.berkeley.edu

FRIDAY 15
LECTURE
Eric Owen Moss,
Jean Michel Crattaz
Jean Michel Crattaz's quasar
7 p.m.
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

SATURDAY 16
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Johan Nobell
Sandroni.Rey
2762 South La Cienega Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.sandronirey.com

Marie Thibeault
Jancar Gallery
3875 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.jancargallery.com

SUNDAY 17
LECTURE
Enrique Chagoya
Borderlandia
3:00 p.m.
Berkeley Art Museum
and Pacific Film Archive
2625 Durant Ave., Berkeley
www.bampfa.berkeley.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
4260 Member
Black & White Exhibit
A Studio Gallery
4260 Lankershim Blvd.,
Studio City
www.astudiogallery.com

WEDNESDAY 20
LECTURE
Neil Spiller
Communicating Vessels
7 p.m.
W.M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

FRIDAY 22
LECTURE
David Gerber
InFORMation & InNOVation
1 p.m.
W.M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

SATURDAY 23
EXHIBITION OPENINGS
Nathan Mabry
Cherry and Martin
12611 Venice Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.cherryandmartin.com

Make Art/Stop AIDS
UCLA Fowler Museum of
Cultural History
405 Hilgard Ave.
www.fowler.ucla.edu

Elizabeth Bryant
Solway Jones Gallery
5377 Wilshire Blvd.,
Los Angeles
www.solwayjonesgallery.com

Lee Friedlander
San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

WEDNESDAY 27
LECTURE
Giovanni La Varra
Milanese Chronicles
7 p.m.
W.M. Keck Lecture Hall
SCI-Arc
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

THURSDAY 28
LECTURE
Yaron Z. Eliav
Roman Statues, Rabbis, and
Graeco-Roman Culture
8 p.m.
The J. Paul Getty Villa
17985 Pacific Coast Hwy.,
Pacific Palisades
www.getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING
Michael Moon
Inner Spaces
Artamo Gallery
11 West Anapamu St.,
Santa Barbara
www.artamogallery.com



MICHAEL KENNA/COURTESY THE ELKHORN SLOUGH FOUNDATION

ELKHORN SLOUGH:
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHAEL KENNA
Monterey Museum of Art
559 Pacific Street, Monterey
February 9 to July 13

With more than 7,000 acres of protected land, Monterey Bay's Elkhorn Slough watershed is teeming with birds, otters, sharks, and seals, yet renowned photographer Michael Kenna's serene images of empty landscapes draw attention to the beauty behind it all. A series of 33 silver gelatin prints taken in the late 1980s provide a window into the diverse topography of the slough, including a PG&E power plant, which takes on a peaceful monumentality through Kenna's lens. In *Moss Landing Power Station, California, USA*, Kenna's use of long exposures makes the electricity generators' smoke seem like soft curling brush strokes against a horizontal pattern of wispy clouds. In *Fence Posts, Tidal Lagoon, Elkhorn Slough* (above), the black silhouette of a fence reflects onto a silver lagoon, separating the viewer from the seemingly endless natural landscape beyond. In this exhibit, Kenna captures the beauty present in two completely dichotomous environments: one distinctly inspiring, the other generally seen as repugnant. It leads one to wonder, what else might seem perversely beautiful if we looked at it through a different lens?



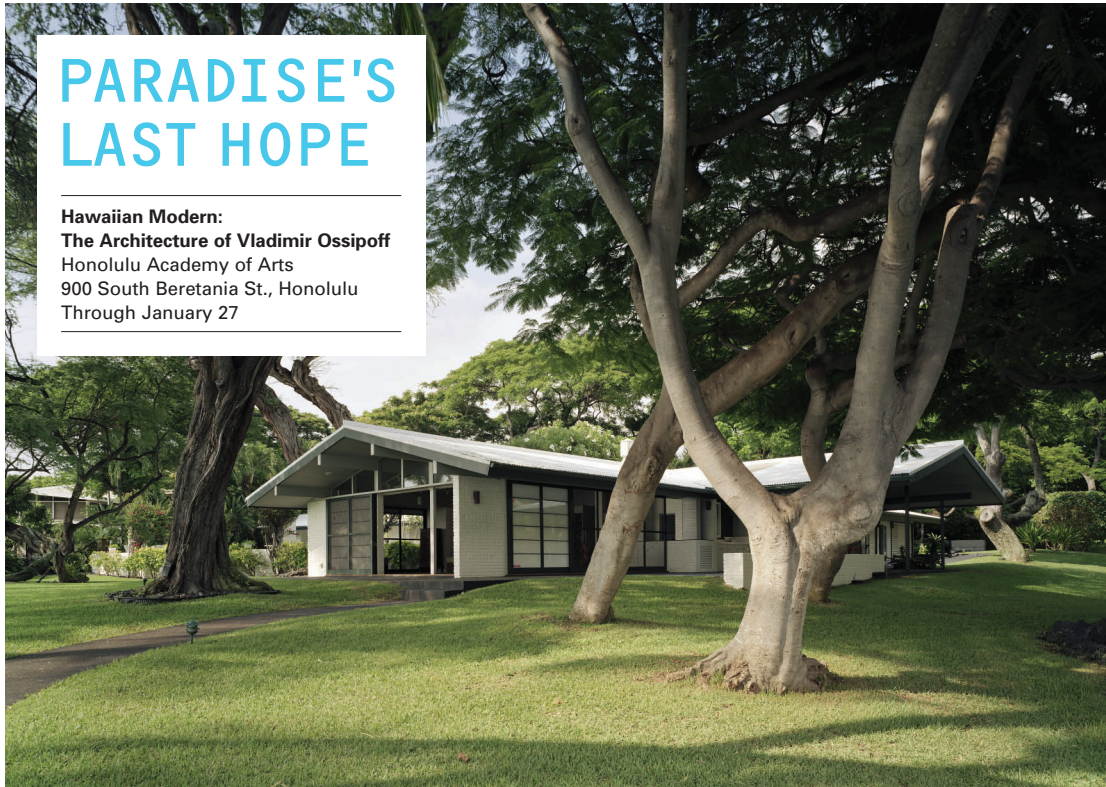
NICK WALKER

PRETTY DECORATING
Carmichael Gallery of Contemporary Art
1257 N. La Brea Avenue, West Hollywood
February 2 to 24

Residents of LA, watch out—there's a Vandal in your midst. His preferred mode of transport is a red hot-air balloon, perfect for quick getaways after enlivening the architecture of cities across the world with his graffiti. No scruffy kid, this natty outlaw sports a suit and a jaunty bowler hat. So who is this mysterious Vandal? The thus-named character bears a certain similarity to his creator, street artist Nick Walker, and the Vandal is the star of Walker's new solo exhibition, *Pretty Decorating*. The show features some 30 of Walker's works, including many elaborate stencil paintings from *The Morning After* series, in which the Vandal surveys the results of his previous night's work in cities such as Bristol, Walker's hometown (above); Sydney; New York; and Los Angeles. The artist himself will echo his character's escapades during the show, decorating LA's streets with posters and paintings. (Hint: *Moona Lisa*, an update to the da Vinci masterpiece, might make a cheeky appearance.)

PARADISE'S LAST HOPE

**Hawaiian Modern:
The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff**
Honolulu Academy of Arts
900 South Beretania St., Honolulu
Through January 27



COURTESY HONOLULU ACADEMY OF ARTS

For a moment in 1958, it seemed as if the architecture world's attention was riveted on the nascent modernism of the Hawaiian Islands. On the cover of *House Beautiful* that July was the 1952 Liljestrand House, named Pace Setter house of the year. Fifty-three pages of the magazine revealed its angular redwood and glass, open to the elements, perched high above Honolulu. At the heart of this iconic residence was an architect named Vladimir Ossipoff and a movement to redefine Hawaiian regionalism.

Yet only a year later, two major factors forever soured Ossipoff's optimism. Hawaii became a state, bringing with it the inevitable mainland influences on its culture; and jetliners began depositing numbers of tourists that Hawaii's easygoing development couldn't accommodate. Honolulu became a sea of generic white condo towers of uniform height, descended from questionable Spanish-style ancestors, with some Asian embellishments sprinkled over them for good measure.

But the traveling exhibition *Hawaiian Modern: The Architecture of Vladimir Ossipoff*, currently at the Honolulu Academy of Arts, brings hope. This retrospective of the man who transformed Hawaiian architecture delivers lessons for place-sensitive development to any metropolis that must resolve similar issues between the past and future. The exhibition next travels to Yale University's School of Architecture Gallery in September and then to the Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt, Germany, in February 2009.

Although barely on the radar of architects from the contiguous 48, Ossipoff is a household name for many Hawaii residents. Born in Russia, Ossipoff was raised in Tokyo and Berkeley, where he studied

architecture at the University of California. He made an auspicious move to Hawaii at the behest of a classmate in 1931, and island life agreed with him. He founded his firm in 1936, which still bears his name—Ossipoff Snyder & Rowland Architects—though he died in 1998. He became a civic leader, and completed more than a thousand projects, all in Hawaii. Although he was best known for his monumental residential projects, his works for institutions and industry are landmarks of an emerging modern age.

Architect and Hawaii native Dean Sakamoto grew up with Ossipoff's work (and even approached him for a job; Ossipoff wasn't hiring). In his current roles as director of exhibitions at the Yale School of Architecture and principal of his own firm in New Haven, he approached the Honolulu Academy of Arts with the idea to curate an exhibition to coincide with the centennial of Ossipoff's birth in November 1907. Sakamoto's firm also designed the exhibition, which divides Ossipoff's work into five themes: Revealing the Site; Hawaiian and Modern; Darkness

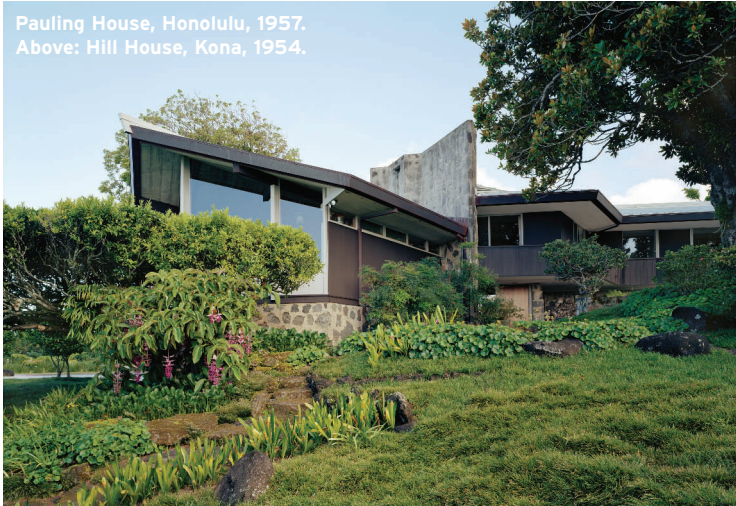
and Air; Native Materials and Modern Tectonics; and The Living Lanai. Perhaps the most signature element of Hawaiian modernism, the lanai is a traditional Hawaiian open-air shelter that was modernized into an indoor-outdoor living area.

Hawaiian Modern is laid out like an Ossipoff residence, transitioning between small, narrow corridors and larger, more dramatic spaces. The exhibition relies heavily on historic black-and-white photographs, with drawings, ephemera, and press clippings. Additional contemporary color photography by Victoria Sambunaris was also commissioned for the show.

The 14 tabletop maquettes crafted by Sakamoto's office are especially effective for explaining Ossipoff's unconventional use of site, as at the Robert H. Shipman Thurston, Jr. Memorial Chapel at the Punahou School (1967), which incorporated a sacred natural spring as a design element. A scale model also reproduces Ossipoff's most remarkable structural detail, the sunscreen on the 1962 IBM Building, which has a curve too steep for

continued on page 19

Pauling House, Honolulu, 1957.
Above: Hill House, Kona, 1954.



ROMANTIC PRESERVATION

California Romantica
D. J. Waldie, created by Diane Keaton
Rizzoli, \$65.00



LISA HARDWAY/PAUL HESTER

Sumptuously photographed and voluptuously oversized, *California Romantica* is definitely a coffee-table book, which is just what you'd expect from a book about the Spanish Revival haciendas and estates built in Southern California during the boom years of the 1920s. But don't let the format fool you. This book is part of a tradition that dates back to David Brower, the director of the Sierra Club in the 1950s and '60s, and

his coffee-table books have a mission.

The book is also on something of a rescue mission. Spanish Revival is hardly in vogue. It is easy to dismiss this architecture—which includes various styles, from Moorish to Mission—as nothing more than a confection. Indeed, in a photograph of a 1925 mansion called "Florestal," designed by George Washington Smith, you see the house in midrestoration, circa the present. Chunks

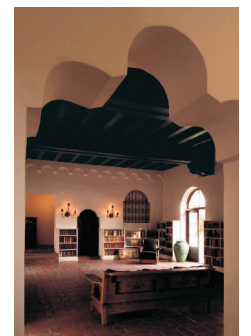
of interior plaster and lengths of rigid pipe electrical conduit are dangling from exposed and blandly ordinary 2-by-4 studs. The image is reminiscent of Reyner Banham's investigation of the attic of the Gamble House, where he uncovers the shoddy workmanship that supports the image of genuine craft.

But insightful text by Los Angeles writer D. J. Waldie and the fine, closely observed photographs of Lisa Hardaway and Paul Hester reveal that this is no Banham-style debunking. Authenticity isn't the point. Yes, it is true

continued on page 18



Above: The Ogilvy Estate staircase in Montecito;
Left: Casa del Herrero in Montecito;
Below: Villa Aurora in Pacific Palisades.



THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER JANUARY 30, 2008

ROMANTIC PRESERVATION continued from page 17 that Spanish Revival is somewhat crackpot, since there was nothing romantic about the Spanish conquest of California, and the crumbling missions, far from Shakespeare's "bare ruined choirs," were symbols of the decimation of the native California Indians. And the architectural style itself was pure invention, drawn up by New York architect Bertram Goodhue for his design of the 1915 Panama Exposition on Balboa Island in San Diego. That exposition hooked the public on a version of California's past that never existed. So what? Spanish Colonial Revival quickly replaced the craftsman bungalow as the Southern California vernacular.

Architects such as Wallace Neff, Richard Requa, Myron Hunt, and Lillian Rice, among many others, were far from hacks, and the homes they designed for well-to-do clients—mostly recent transplants from the Midwest and the East—had all the requisite grillwork, tiles, fountains, towers, arches, outsized fireplaces, and hand-hewed beams to completely fill a catalogue of imported Mexican, Spanish, Persian, Tunisian, and Italian gewgaws. But these were hardly the point. As the architectural historian David Gebhard noted 40 years ago, "These designers produced buildings that were conceived of as sculptural volumes, closely attached to the land." The best of their work was a meditation on the Southern California landscape, the quality of light, color, and shadow. Rooms were volumes intended to capture, shape, and reflect the brilliance and evanescence of the sunlight. Exterior walls, as Waldie notes, were "not molded or carved decoration but screens for the movement of shadows that project from corbels, beam-ends, grills, lanterns, and the tracery of tree limbs."

Hardaway and Hester keep their lens close to their subject. They study the particulars, the way yellow light rakes across smooth white plaster, or how arched beams and candlestick balusters add out-of-step rhythms to a vaulted ceiling. One shot especially captures much of what Spanish Revival was supposed to be. From the long central corridor of the 1926 Ogilvy house in Montecito near Santa Barbara, the viewer looks out a doorway at a vaguely Islamic octagonal fountain and a rim of blue-grey trees beyond. The hallway is sedate, unadorned, a composition of thick plaster walls, wooden beams tightly spaced at the ceiling, and shiny pan tile flooring. The photograph conveys an unpretentious retreat into the sage hills—a home in repose, at ease in its surroundings.

Waldie writes, "The hope of many Californians—then and now—was to be at home in a place in which light and air and landscape merged, a place in which all of nature and art might be bounded by a low garden wall." *California Romantica* reminds us that out of a bastard style such dreams were made.

GREG GOLDIN IS ARCHITECTURE CRITIC AT LOS ANGELES MAGAZINE AND WRITES ON URBAN AFFAIRS FOR THE LOS ANGELES TIMES WEST MAGAZINE.

The "extreme cantilever" consists of tensioned ropes framed by a wending network of aluminum tubing.



COURTESY MATERIALS & APPLICATION

WEB OF INSPIRATION

Density Fields
Materials & Applications
1619 Silver Lake Blvd., Los Angeles
Through March

On a hectic stretch of Silver Lake Boulevard, strange and chimerical installations periodically burst into view from a narrow concrete courtyard, transfixing neighborhood residents and startling motorists with their seemingly dislocated beauty.

Materials & Applications (M&A) is a nonprofit gallery calling itself a "research and exhibition center." It takes the latter part of that designation seriously. Founder Jenna Didier presents two installations each year. Resisting the elitism that

frequently pervades the worlds of art and architecture is M&A's principal charge. "The courtyard is open to the street and free to the public, and we host frequent open-air discussions," Didier said.

The current installation, *Density Fields*, thrusts out over the rock garden at M&A, advancing the notion of public art by evoking connections with the surrounding neighborhood. Designed by husband-and-wife team Dwayne Oyler and Jenny Wu of the Oyler Wu Collaborative, *Density Fields* grew from a model that used geometric "lines

of communication" to connect points within the courtyard, while also extending outward to neighboring buildings. By editing those geometric elements into the confined space of the M&A courtyard, they've created a complex, hovering "extreme cantilever" that is both tense and delicate.

Adroitly blending sculpture and architecture, *Density Fields* is constructed from a bewildering web of tensioned polypropylene ropes framed by a network of aluminum tubing. The silver ropes, which tension the cantilever, shimmer

in the evening light, resembling steel bridge cables. The densely woven "fields" created by the crosshatching lines of rope transform and shift as you examine the installation from different perspectives.

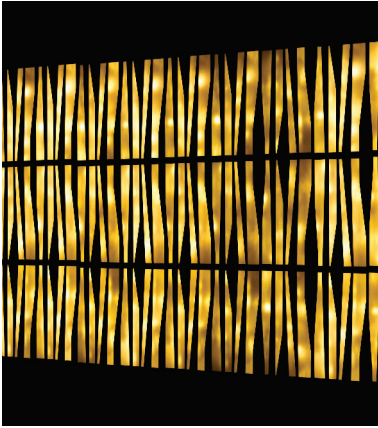
While the 25-foot cantilever hangs with a kind of malevolent elegance overhead and out of reach, furniture elements, such as a table and bench constructed of the metallic rope, gently bring the piece down to earth and provide a kind of humanizing anchor.

The notion of a dialogue between the geometry of *Density Fields* and the surrounding neighborhood arose out of a series of spatial ideas sketched out over the years, said the artists. Oyler Wu eventually sought to deploy those ideas as a rich spatial experience within the confines of the M&A courtyard, while also taking into account the environment beyond the site's boundaries.

The choice of materials eloquently transmits the architects' intent from sketch to execution; the delicately woven web buzzes with a taut conductivity. At the same time, the cantilever seems to hover at the edge of stability, while retaining an awkward poise. In fact, the whole piece reflects the skewed energy of the neighborhood, a gentrifying hotbed of art and music, strewn with midcentury and Spanish Revival homes, with a modest infestation of dingbats. The permeable nature of the construction—dominating without overwhelming the courtyard—also meshes with M&A's welcoming communalism.

The firm's third summer project, much of *Density Fields* was welded and installed by volunteers and members of the Oyler Wu office staff. Passersby who travel down this unremarkable stretch of Silver Lake Boulevard might understandably be not only drawn into *Density Fields* but also inspired by it.

BASED IN LA, MIKE SCHULTE IS A FREQUENT CONTRIBUTOR TO ROBB REPORT MOTORCYCLING AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS.



Silvus sconce

Ivalo Lighting
www.ivaloighting.com
The flowing forms of water coursing across foliage and rays of sunlight filtering through forest trees inspired the look of this sconce designed by Roger Duffy and others from Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Silvus may be used alone or in groups for a more dramatic effect (left). Equipped with clusters of interior LEDs, each 13-inch-by-24-inch-by-6-inch sconce can glow in white, red, green, blue, or a mixed color. And if a constant glow is too old-school, you can choose illumination that pulses or shifts between colors. It's a light to suit every changing mood.



NAMI washbasin

RAPSEL Spa
www.rapsel.it
Italian designer Matteo Nunziati was cutting and folding two pieces of paper when he was inspired to create this origami-like washbasin. Crafted of Nikron, a new material similar to Corian, the washbasin's light, boxy shape is all well-defined angles and flat planes. In short, it's a quintessential minimalist bathroom fixture. Two 20-centimeter shelves create a vanity top, making NAMI a multipurpose item capable of being mounted onto the wall or attached to a washstand. In the United States, the new product is available at AF New York in Manhattan's Flatiron District.

SEND PRODUCT RELEASES TO
PRODUCTS@ARCHPAPER.COM

PARADISE'S LAST HOPE continued from
page 17 nesting birds or grime to accumulate.

The most representative and intriguing element of Ossipoff's philosophy manifested itself not in a structure but in a scathing cultural commentary: As AIA Hawaii chapter president in 1964, Ossipoff declared a "War on Ugliness" (though Ossipoff built one of the first of a wave of generic white towers, the Diamond Head Apartments, in 1958). This direct attack on rampant overdevelopment, culturally insensitive design, irresponsible building practices, and lack of urban planning was widely reported in the media. One look at Waikiki Beach, and it appears to have been lost.

However outspoken in his expectations for Hawaii's future, Ossipoff was not one to reflect upon his own work. He reportedly shrugged off any comparisons to other architects, and the exhibition is forced to do the same. A timeline, which cross-references Ossipoff's life with Hawaiian politics, world events, and architectural milestones, further highlights these glaring questions about how (or if) Ossipoff connected to the architecture world at large. Although there are hints at influences—Frank Lloyd Wright is an obvious one—Ossipoff appeared to operate independently from their inspiration, or pretended he did. He attended a reputable Beaux Arts school and worked in the office of noted territorial Hawaiian architect Charles W. Dickey, but there are neither mentions

of mentors nor apprentices who faithfully carried on his legacy. What is covered in depth is Ossipoff's brusque, at times abrasive personality and his often-silent demeanor.

The exhibition does not explain whether this isolationist tendency was self-imposed or could be blamed on Hawaii's remote location. Did the architect not receive commissions outside of Hawaii, or did he choose not to accept them? What prevented him from achieving fame outside the state? Was it his choice to perfect a kind of regionalism because of his love for Hawaii, or his desire to be the most celebrated architect in a small architectural community?

Toward the end of the exhibition, Ossipoff's last major project is given significant real estate. Almost every visitor to Honolulu experiences the delight of stepping off the plane and right back outdoors into the soaring lanais and palm groves of the Honolulu International Airport, which Ossipoff modernized in 1972. His eloquent embrace of the jetliner is endangered: A new masterplan for the airport might eradicate Ossipoff's contributions. If that happens, the high visibility of this exhibition is perfectly timed. At best, it will convince another generation of planners and architects that the War on Ugliness is even more relevant than it was when first declared, and—for Honolulu at least—it's not too late.

ALISSA WALKER IS BASED IN LA AND IS A REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR TO AN'S CALIFORNIA EDITION.

WWW.ARCHPAPER.COM

LIVABLE PLACES



Presents **EcoDensity**
VANCOUVER STYLE

Vancouver's success in creating a livable downtown with 80,000 residents has spawned some new terms, including Vancouverism and EcoDensity. Hear Gordon Price, a Vancouver City Councillor for six terms and current Director of Simon Fraser University's City Program, tell the Vancouver story as we Envision a Green LA.

GORDON PRICE

in conversation with Cecilia Estolano, Chief Executive Officer of L.A.'s Community Redevelopment Agency

Monday February 11, 2008

5:30pm Reception – 6:30pm Talk

Immanuel Presbyterian Church
3300 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90010

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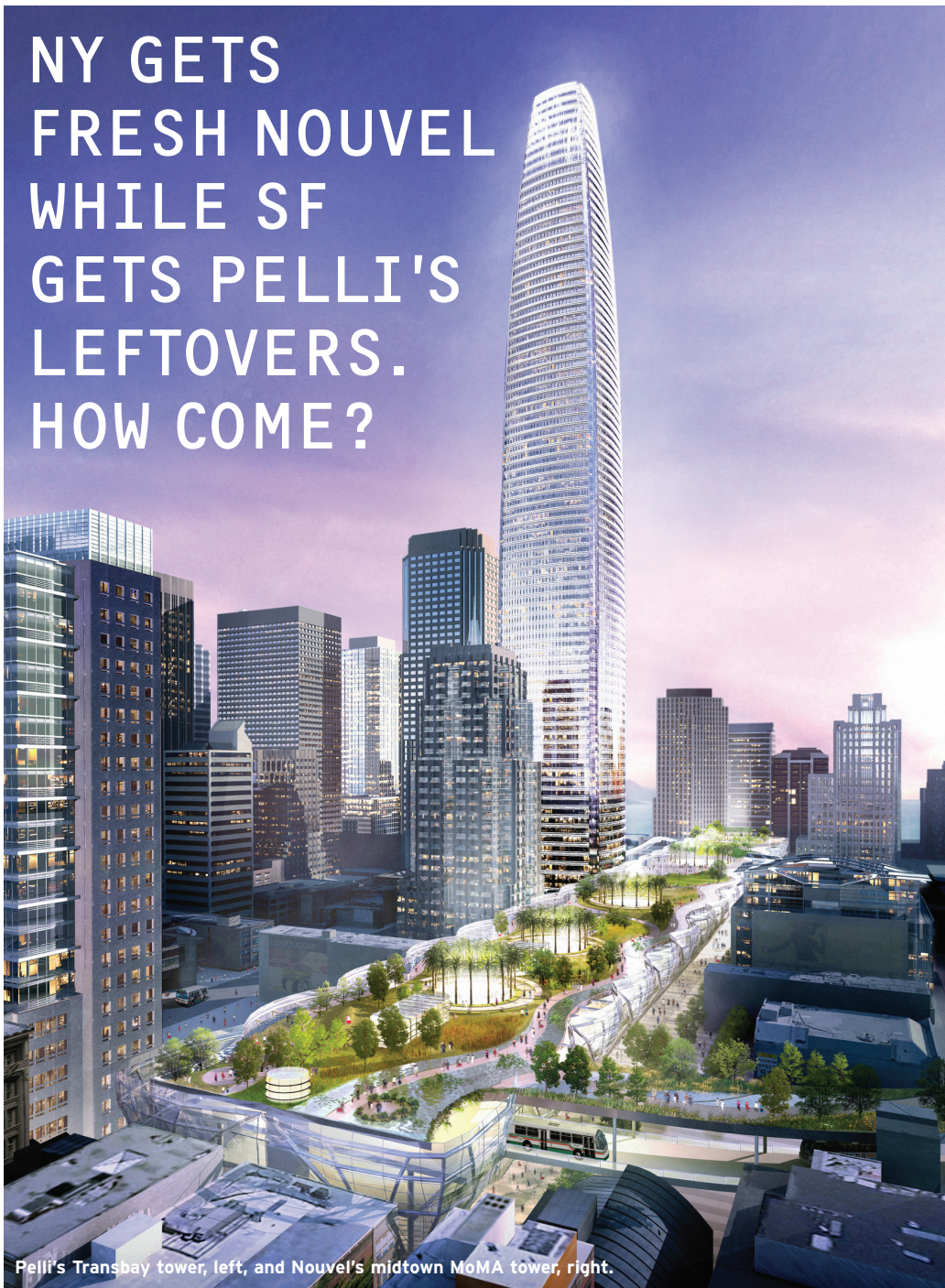
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NY GETS FRESH NOUVEL WHILE SF GETS PELLI'S LEFTOVERS. HOW COME?



Pelli's Transbay tower, left, and Nouvel's midtown MoMA tower, right.



COURTESY (LEFT) PELLI CLARKE PELLI/TJPA; (RIGHT) ATELIER JEAN NOUVEL

I winced when I saw the *Times'* headline, "Next to MoMA, Reaching for the Stars." Jean Nouvel's new 75-story tower alongside the Museum of Modern Art reached back to Lyonel Feininger for inspiration, finally realizing his vision of an expressionist tower. It's hard to imagine a stronger contrast to Cesar Pelli's safely office-like MoMA housing or Yoshio Taniguchi's recent, buttoned-down expansion. "To its credit, the Modern pressed for a talented architect," *Times'* critic Nicolai Ouroussoff wrote, but he goes on to praise Hines, the tower's "remarkably astute" developer. "Hines asked Nouvel to come up with two possible designs... and made the bolder choice." That's Hines in New York.

This fall, Hines also won the right to develop the Transbay Tower in downtown San Francisco. Pelli's proposal for the transit hub component of the project is well done, but the tower is a version of his International

Financial Center mega-tower in Hong Kong. As usual for Hines—they really are "remarkably astute"—Pelli was a smart choice. The Airport Express station that serves Hong Kong's financial district anchors the twin-tower IFC complex. From a credentials standpoint, that's a valuable experience. Plus a tower that's up-and-running is easier to price, even with differences in construction, than one-offs like Richard Rogers and SOM's competing finalists. Armed with that knowledge, Hines played its trump card, offering up to \$350 million for the land—more than twice what the other two developers were prepared to pay. That's Hines in San Francisco.

Hines is Hines—the same smart operators, east and west. Given what they're proposing for New York, blame for San Francisco's less-than-stellar tower falls somewhere else.

Jokingly called Dean Macris' last erection, the Transbay Tower

benefited from the recently-departed planning czar's determination to fulfill his long-time vision of a city skyline marked by three accentuated "hills"—two real and one manmade. This is the same vision that gave us One Rincon Hill, the first in a two-tower wonder by Chicago's Solomon Cordwell Buenz. Compared to it, Pelli's proposal is definite progress.

A lot of people have questioned the logic of Macris' *idée fixe*, but that's another article. The question here is how a competition that was advertised as being all about design proved to be all about money. Not that this is surprising, but—in light of promises made—it feels like a bait and switch. And if I feel this way, imagine how SOM feels!

I wasn't privy to the jury's deliberations, but a few things stuck out along the way. In the initial interviews, Norman Foster failed to appear and his team was eliminated. While architect no-shows are a standard m.o.

(and conform to Woody Allen's maxim that "85 percent of life is showing up"), their reaction struck me as a surefire sign of provinciality. Another sign of that was the dearth of interesting architects in the mix.

Again, I didn't make the rules, but at roughly the same time that the Transbay schemes were being unveiled, Thom Mayne won a competition for a new tower at La Défense in Paris that clearly breaks new ground. This was another reason to wince, since a second major work by Mayne might finally put San Francisco on the architectural map.

Of course, Calatrava made the cut, only to have a falling out with his developer. Perhaps he was chosen, like Icarus, to exemplify the dangers of the creative edge. That left SOM, whose tower—while drawing on a Chinese precedent—alone showed the originality that the competition promised. With its blend of structure and sustain-

ability, it presented a credible future for tall buildings in the earthquake-prone west coast. Plus, it was new, and that seemed to be what was wanted. (Unlike SOM's, Richard Rogers' peculiar tower was a throwback to his high-tech, frame-and-infill days, but vastly toned down with no real gain in use value, especially as office space.) SOM's tower fit the bill, if the object had been to build a tower in San Francisco that broke the mold. In retrospect, no such luck.

The Transbay Tower reminds me of the new east span of the Bay Bridge, a chance squandered to do something on a par with the Golden Gate. San Francisco rises to its own occasions with about the same frequency as its earthquakes—maybe less frequently. In that sense, there's no real mystery about the latest outcome. Still, it makes me wince.

JOHN PARMAN WRITES FOR SAN FRANCISCO'S LINE (WWW.LINEMAG.ORG) AND URBANIST.

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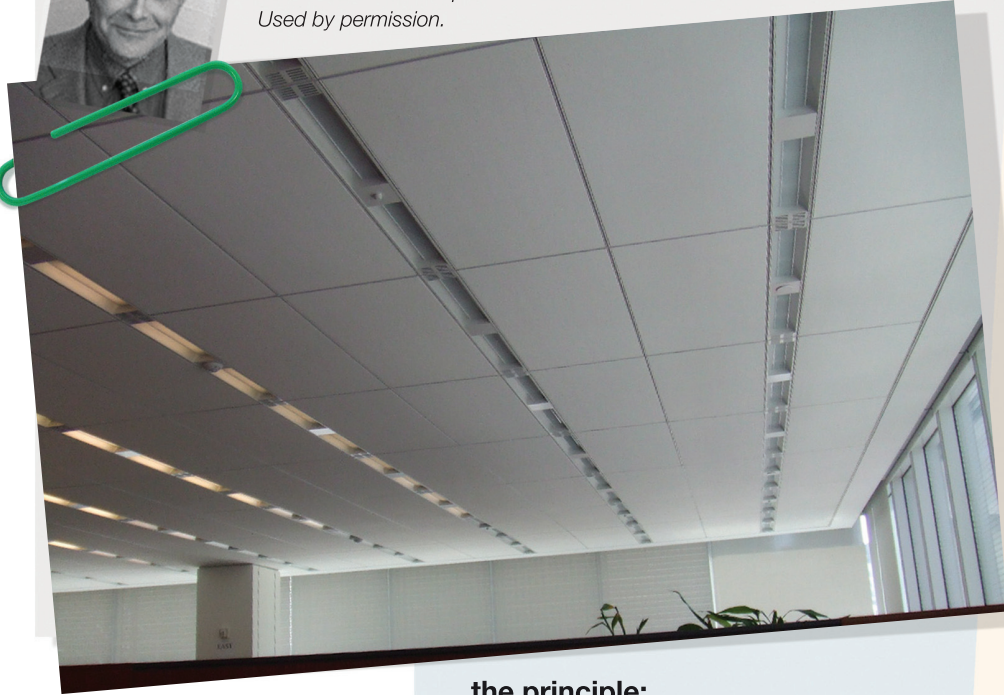
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